

Reprint's Circular Association 915  
COLL

I'm not sure this man  
actually thanked that  
my great grand father's  
brother was fatally wounded  
at gettysburg, but it seems  
as if he did it.

NATIONAL THANKSGIVING,

AUGUST 6, 1863.

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Chancellor Ferris' Sermon,

IN

UNIVERSITY PLACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

NEW-YORK.

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THE

# DUTIES OF THE TIMES:

PREACHED ON THE

NATIONAL THANKSGIVING,

August 6, 1863,

IN THE

University Place Presbyterian Church.

BY

ISAAC FERRIS, D.D.,

CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE CITY OF NEW-YORK.

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1863.

## A PROCLAMATION:

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

IT has pleased Almighty God to hearken to the supplications and prayers of an afflicted people, and to vouchsafe to the army and navy of the United States, on the land and on the sea, victories so signal and so effective as to furnish reasonable grounds for augmented confidence that the Union of these States will be maintained, their Constitution preserved, and their peace and prosperity permanently preserved; but these victories have been accorded not without sacrifice of life, limb, health, and liberty, incurred by brave, patriotic, and loyal citizens. Domestic affliction in every part of the country follows in the train of these fearful bereavements. It is meet and right to recognize and confess the presence of the Almighty Father, and the power of his hand equally in these triumphs and these sorrows.

Now, therefore, be it known that I do set apart Thursday, the sixth day of August next, as a day for National Thanksgiving, praise, and prayer, and I invite the people of the United States to assemble on that occasion in their customary places of worship, and in the forms approved by their own conscience, render the homage due to the Divine Majesty for the wonderful things he has done in the Nation's behalf, and invoke the influence of his Holy Spirit to subdue the anger which has produced and so long sustained a needless and cruel rebellion; to change the hearts of the insurgents; to guide the counsels of the Government with wisdom adequate to so great a National emergency, and to visit with tender care and consolation, throughout the length and breadth of our land all those who, through the vicissitudes of marches, voyages, battles, and sieges, have been brought to suffer in mind, body, or estate; and, finally, to lead the whole nation through paths of repentance and submission to the Divine will, back to the perfect enjoyment of union and fraternal peace.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, this fifteenth day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the eighty-eighth.

By the President,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

## DUTIES OF THE TIMES.

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MATTHEW 22 : 21.

"RENDER therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's."

JESUS CHRIST is presented to us as a Lawgiver as well as a Redeemer. As a Lawgiver, he exercises supreme and universal authority. His control is *absolute*, while it is *original*, as he is God. The highest and the lowest—men in seats of human authority, as well as men under authority; rich and poor, learned and unlearned, of all climes, of all colors, and of all conditions—are alike his subjects, and receive his dictation as to duty.

In the text he speaks as the Lawgiver, most wisely discriminating between the claims of duty, and indicating the due classification, and settling the obligatory character of both in question.

The occasion was of most interesting character.

He was surrounded by a group of artful enemies, seeking to entrap him by cunning questions—aiming to suspend him on dilemmas, on either horn of which he might be their victim. But they soon found the folly of their efforts, and stood mortified and humbled before their sneering opponents of another sect. They approach him in a courtly manner; they would blind

him as to their real object by a compliment to his honesty and independence ; and could they have succeeded in obtaining a negative answer, it would have been the grand basis of a charge for subverting the government of Cæsar. The coin in question had on it an impression of one of the Cæsar's, probably of Tiberius.

"Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man : for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou ? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not ? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites ? Show me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription ? They say unto him, Cæsar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's. When they had heard these words, they marveled, and left him, and went their way."

Here is a recognition of two classes of duty — one due to civil government, and the other to God, and both belonging to his code. The sum is, that we are bound most solemnly and directly to render service to the civil government represented by Cæsar, and to God as above all and over all, and that the truly Christian man connects both. To-day we may well give attention to both.

“ RENDER UNTO CÆSAR THE THINGS WHICH ARE  
CÆSAR’S.”

As to this first part of the divine injunction, nothing can be more pointed. Its propriety, its importance—yes, its necessity, can not be justly gainsaid.

Civil government, in one aspect, is the gift of God; in another, it is a necessity growing out of the multifarious wants, views, interests, and conflicting or various pursuits of men, as well as their various temperaments and relations with each other, and those of other associations into which men are broken up. It becomes the tie binding all together in a harmonious whole; it holds the shield over the head of the weak and those needing support, and is the cherisher of all interests and legitimate pursuits; it is the arbiter between the weak and the strong, the rich and the poor, the ambitious and the humble, the turbulent and the pacific. The principle governing duty here is, that benefits enjoyed require corresponding returns or equivalents.

This is readily illustrated. The affairs of civil society can not be conducted without agents; these agents can not do society’s work without support or compensation. These must be provided for. We know duty must be defined; or, in other words, we must have laws. There must be law-makers, and they must be provided for. The laws must be executed, hence there must be judges. The criminal must be dealt with when penalty is awarded; executives of varying grades must give their time and labor to it. All the wants, the comforts, the conveniences of society must be met by suitable appointments. We see here how the whole machinery of civil government grows up. The provision for it all must be met by

those who enjoy the results, and the amount contributed by each must be governed by the relative proportion of the interests of each. This is the teaching of common-sense. Hence there must be taxes, or tithes, or tributes, in forms as various as the interests represented.

These claims of society are ordinary and they are extraordinary; that is, the conditions of society vary. In *peace*, all things flow on in even tenor; the course of duty is plain, equable. The demands of allegiance, obedience to law, and support, are met without question, and without jar or hesitation.

But when a new condition of things arises; when difficulties come; when public relations become complicated; when the burden of war has fallen upon a people; when rebellion or insurrection occur; when the civil government is threatened with subversion; when its vitality is endangered—the forms of duty and civil obligation remain the same, but become intensified—some classes pressing with greater force or urgency. The new condition suggests that new and special provisions must be made. There must be armies collected; there must be navies built—for defense—for vindication of rights and satisfaction of fair claims.

The same great principle runs through all. Special demands must be made for pecuniary aid, for personal service, for the extra risks and hazards which have arisen. And by the rule of the text, by this teaching of Jesus Christ, every man is bound, without exception, in some proper way, to join in bearing the burdens, and sharing the risks, and rendering the personal service necessary. It belongs to each as directly as to pay a tribute or a license-fee, to help bear the burdens, while the force of circumstances increases the claim in some particular forms.

The mode in which the claims and the measure of them, and their distribution is to be arranged, must be placed in some responsible hands. The individual can not take the matter into his own hands, for his is an individual or one-sided view; whereas what is done should be done for the whole, and for any given individual as one of the whole. Under *despotism*, the will of a master settles the question. Our mode, and that of free governments, submits this to legislative authority, and that made up of persons who are chosen representatives of the whole, in whom each citizen has a share, through whom, in fact, he is making his own laws as often as enactments are made.

Now the presumption must be, that what they in proper form indicate as duties owed by the citizen to the government, varying with the condition and circumstances and times, is right. I say the presumption must be, for who are they but citizens having common interests and bearing common burdens?

To my mind, all these points come under the Divine Legislator's rule, "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's;" and this has the greater force when you remember that that Cæsar was a cruel despot. They lead me to the conclusion that the truly Christian citizen is a true man, in every sense, to his government, and makes it a part of his piety to bear his share of the public burdens and expenses promptly and cheerfully, and with the same promptness to give his personal services or equivalent when required, whether the condition of society be one of peace or war. The simple, primary duty of every man is, (unless conscience be violated by the demand,) obedience to the powers that be;\* and his religion will carry the interests of such on his heart to the mercy-seat. It is war-

\* Romans 13:1, etc.

rantable to conclude that, under Christ's rule, the Apostles and primitive disciples prayed even for the monsters Nero, and Tiberius, and Caligula;\* indeed, the greater the monster, the greater the need for prayer.

You will observe that, had Christ taught a different course, he would have taught rebellion; but the rule he lays down conveys the truth that no man has a right to rebel. A justifiable rebellion, so to speak, could only occur as a last exigency, and that would constitute revolution.

The position taken will be met by the remark that the law-making authority is not infallible. Granted that it may err, that it does err. Therefore it is said the presumptions are, that what it defines and requires as duty is right, because it acts deliberately, besides being made up of men who must take their share in the burdens laid upon their fellow-citizens. And supposing there is error, or mistake, or even wrong, the remedy can not be in the individual, but in society. If any one individual may take the law into his own hands, or make a law for himself, then another man may do it, and every distinct individual may do it, and then you have no society, but chaos and anarchy. Some men think personal violence is the remedy. Not so taught Christ, but pay the tribute. Besides, such violence only makes an additional wrong, where it assumes there was one already.

The true remedy is, by fair and honorable means seeking to make a new law-making power, or by bringing judicial wisdom to bear in setting aside what is complained of. Every sound man, every good citizen, every man who really seeks the good, the peace of society, will take this course.

The proper and fair evolution of the rule of Jesus

Christ, in our text, it will be seen, involves every thing of moment in civil society. Let this rule be carried out, and the whole course of civil government becomes easy, and develops most beneficially its power for good. It is strange that Christian men should have difficulties here. They will not, indeed, if things, if duties, are viewed from the stand-point of our Lord; if men will simply follow the Saviour's counsel.

The Saviour's rule finds a direct application in the circumstances in which our civil affairs are found. Let us suppose the multitude to be gathered around his person now as they were then, and the inquiry be, Is it right and proper to submit to the civil enactments of our government? His reply is: "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's." The truly Christian man must yield to this. It is amazing that some good men do not see this. But, alas! passion and prejudice reign rather than principle—even the most elementary principle. Men change their ground for policy sake, and what is advocated this year is opposed the next. *But principles do not change.*

But, my brethren, that which we have the most to do with to-day, is the second part of the Divine rule:

"AND TO GOD THE THINGS THAT ARE GOD'S."

Here our field is delightful and clear. The Psalmist says, with a peculiar emphasis, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord;" and with Israel of old we come in for a share of that blessedness. When we come down to the minute notice of the course of men, we see much to deplore. God, the true God, is not in men's thoughts; his law is broken, his authority contemned; yet, as a nation, our God is the Lord. The mind rests with pleasure on the abounding proof

of this fact. The past, how full of it! From the first planting of our fathers on this soil, onward to this day, the true God has been claimed as ours. The foundations of our government were laid in the full and firm apprehension and acknowledgment of this fact. There is one scene recorded in our history which more than all others shows this; you have it commemorated in the engraving of the First Prayer in Congress. There were the sages and patriots of our land—representatives of the whole country. They had reached a most critical point in their deliberations. They feel the need of higher wisdom than their own. They call in the minister of God, the servant of Jesus Christ; and there and then, in most affecting service, our country—our whole country—is laid at the foot of the divine throne. If ever there was heartfelt acknowledgment of a living and true God, and most hearty and sincere invocation of his favor, was it not there? For themselves, for their living countrymen, for those to come after them, they cast their all on God, and bound themselves and all to him. Most touching scene! Yes, by solemn acknowledgment, the Lord has been taken as our God. And who does not love the tie? Who, descended from or connected with those there represented, desires it to be unloosed—would not reaffirm, for himself and for themselves, that memorable act?

Some would have others believe that Christianity, as a distinct, definite system, is not the characteristic of our land. Ah! whose are the Sabbaths we keep? whose name do they bear? by whose authority are they observed? What is the testimony they bear to heaven, week after week? Whose are these Sanctuaries we frequent, and in which we engage in holy duties? Whose name do we here honor? Whose praises rise

like the floating columns of incense to the skies ? To whom goes up the voice of our supplication and the cry of our necessity ? Whose are those solemn rites which gather many around the Sacramental board, or parents and children at the baptismal font ? Whose volume is here opened as the oracle whose declarations settle all questions and decide all destinies ? What do all these indicate ? Who is our God but the Lord ? How wide-spread this testimony ! from how many altars and how many hearts does it ascend to God continually !

And we have partaken of the blessedness of having such a divine portion. What a history of divine benefactions is ours ! How luminous with the favors of a covenant-keeping God ! What an almost unbroken series of prosperity has been ours ! what a national expansion, from sea to sea, and from the frozen north to the sultry tropics ! What development of resources ! what proportionate extension of the means of intellectual and moral culture ! what a high Christian civilization ! We have much to deplore, we have much yet to do; yet must we not say, "He hath not dealt so with any other people" ? These pleasing reviews have been dwelt on to secure greater readiness to hear and to heed the divine Lawgiver, when he says, "and to God the things that are God's."

In harmony with all this is the work of this day. Now, when it is asked, To what are we as a people specifically called ? the proclamation of our excellent Chief Magistrate points out three things—*Gratitude, Prayer, Repentance.*

#### GRATITUDE.

How exultant the strain of the sweet singer of Israel, in his one hundred and forty-eighth Psalm ! How boldly and joyously he sweeps his harp-strings, as he invokes

the praises of the heavens, and the heights, and the angels, and all things inanimate and animate, and kings of the earth, and all people, princes, and all judges of the earth, both young men and maidens, old men and children! Very much such a jubilant spirit and song should be ours; and old men and children, and young men and maidens, all—all may well join—constituting one grand choir over our land.

In looking over the themes for joyful mention, we must not be restricted to one, or a class, for all are so united that the whole is injured by a piecemeal view, and indeed are to be viewed as having their climax in the glorious July just closed. Is it not a blessed fact, that we *have a government and a country?* We have fallen on remarkable times; altogether unheard of in the world's history; never anticipated among ourselves. We—the world were astounded by the development of a conspiracy of most fearful power, in a large part of our land, having its friends and coadjutors over the whole. There was talent, there was wealth, there was position, there was number enlisted in it, and a series of most surprising circumstances, with utter unscrupulousness and audacity, marked its course. It had been the study of a quarter of a century, and as such was boasted of. At the entrance of the present administration into office, what government had we in reality—what was our country? Traitors had betrayed our forts, had secured our arsenals in their States, had laid hands on the treasure within their grasp, had dispersed our navy. All seemed staggered by the blow; like the mighty ship which strikes a rock and trembles and quivers like an aspen from mast-head to keel. Conspiracy gained confidence, rallied armies, forced war on the country.

All that has been accomplished for the right, has a close connection with the assault on Sumter. The shrewdest said, No blow will be struck; they are not so mad. But God gave them up to that madness, and it was the most fatal step which could have been taken. The hand of God was in it. "That bombardment blew all the plots of the traitors into the air, and inaugurated a change in the sentiment of the country that seemed all but miraculous." The heart of the nation was struck at when they sought to humble the flag. The long train which culminated at Sumter was enough to fire all hearts, and nerve all arms, and combine for action such an army as our country had never before seen. Alas! what was not to be feared up to that hour—at all events, for a long time to follow! But God let the serpent sting, that he might save us by bringing in unison all true hearts. Here begins his blessed work. From that hour he assured to us our government and our country. Praise him! praise him! A distinguished public man has remarked: "Washington has been described as leaning, in his darkest hour, with one arm resting on Massachusetts and the other on North-Carolina; but we may say of Mr. Lincoln, what can be said of no other President since Washington, that, from his dark hour, he rests with one great arm on his political friends, and the other on his political opponents; and that as he looked abroad over the country, he saw neither Republicans nor Democrats, neither nativists nor aliens; but two classes—loyal citizens on the one side, and traitors on the other."\*

And shall we not make special note of *the exuberance of Providential natural gifts?* It will be indelibly written on our hearts, how business was prostrated; how fortunes were lost in a day; how vast indebtedness was,

\* See the admirable address of John Jay, Esq., by Randolph.

by the dash of a pen, repudiated ; and the prophecy of timid ones was, that the government, weighed down by a rapidly accumulating indebtedness, would be overwhelmed by an absolute want of credit, general bankruptcy would ensue, and the working classes, driven to desperation by want of employment, would be infuriated. And why was it not so ? Ah ! the God of providence was at work for us. He sent the early and the latter rain in their season ; he crowned the year with his goodness, and made his paths drop fatness. The vast products of the soil were wealth. They were our home reliance ; they were shipped abroad to meet the wants which had occurred under that same divine hand ; for God, in the seasons of the year, had been working beyond the Atlantic for us. Soon confidence began to be recovered, business revived, money was circulated freely, the industrious in all useful arts were employed. Two fruitful seasons in succession are to be added to other means of saving our country. Praise God for his smiles on the labors of the husbandmen in our dark, civil hour !

It is *also* to be noted with special thanks, how, at the very hour of need, *a spirit of patriotism* was developed, which has since gathered gigantic strength. What is a country without patriotism ? At the hour of need all hearts thrilled with love for our land ; all hands were unlocked, and their ability made tributary to the country's welfare. The wealth which had been amassed, and which might have been a curse, was bountifully poured out. The man of business and the laborer, the man of education and the uncultivated, the professional man and the tradesman, the administrator of law from the bench, and the executive from the chair of state, with hearts beating with the same patriotism,

alike came to the rescue. What a sight we beheld as the mind range over our country! nearly a million of noble hearts engaged in military array in the preservation of our country. Nor was this all; our women have shown the spirit of the Revolutionary period. Their hearts beat with the same impulses; mothers gave their sons, wives their husbands, sisters their brothers, with benedictions. Busy hands plied the needle; everywhere was heard the cheering word, "Come with us to the work;" and in almost every neighborhood the association of patriotic workers was found. And from every circle of influence and character have gone loved ones to the wearisome and often painful work of the nurse, in the hospital and near the battle-field, administering consoling words and comforting cordials to the sick, the wounded, and the dying. Amazing will be the record of the historian on this subject. Whose hand is in all this, which has become so familiar, that we are in danger of regarding it as an ordinary matter? The hand of a God of love and of pity. Praises to his name!

Let us look at *what general results* have been secured, and how they bear on the springs of gratitude; for all these belong to the upward march of our country to its present position.

At the outset of this wicked rebellion we were weak, not for want of means, but for want of preparation. But in what an attitude do we now stand! Prepared at all points, with the work of constant further preparation going on; financially a wonder to the world; independent of foreign credit, and meeting all needs among ourselves; in an attitude to accomplish every thing necessary in the onward course of things; fully feeling our strength—far from being exhausted. Diffi-

culties not a few have been encountered; losses painful and severe have been sustained; dark clouds have at times lowered over us; adverse events have followed in rapid succession; various reliances have been found vain; yet here we stand to-day, through the good hand of God with us, firmer than ever, with two thirds of rebeldom under our hand. The boasting of enemies has been vain; the prophecies of false friends have been vain; the fears of the timid have been vain; foreign envy has croaked in vain. The mighty movements of all departments of the government have brought us up to any work to which we may be called, be it domestic or foreign.

But the Proclamation would have us especially remember, in our thanks to-day, *the wonderful successes of loyal arms* during June and July — successes which I can not but connect with all that has preceded, almost flowing from them. Amazing summary it is; I give you the account by another hand.\*

“A brief review of the events of July will show that in scarcely any war in history have an equal number of weighty blows been struck in such quick succession against an enemy; and those who have sometimes charged the Administration with inertness and incapacity should make amends by owning that this magnificent series of operations, stretching across half a continent, and everywhere successful, deserves the applause of the world.

“On the first of July General Reynolds brought Lee to a stand before Gettysburgh. On the second, Meade fought the rebel army, which he beat on the third. On that day Pemberton made overtures to Grant, and on the fourth Vicksburgh was surrendered. Marmaduke, at the head of fifteen thousand men, was badly cut up at

\* *Evening Post.*

Helena, losing two thousand five hundred; and John Morgan was beaten at Green River Bridge, in Kentucky. On the fifth Rosecrans took Winchester, and on the seventh Tullahoma, Bragg's army flying before him. On the eighth Port Hudson surrendered. On the ninth Buford and Kilpatrick defeated Stuart's famous cavalry at Boonsboro. On the tenth General Gillmore landed on Morris Island, and in the most brilliant manner took all the forts and guns of the enemy there, except Wagner and Cummings's Point; on the same day General Sherman drove Johnston out of Jackson for the second time, and General Blunt beat a rebel army at Fort Gibson. On the thirteenth, Lee's rear-guard was cut to pieces at Falling Waters, and General Pettigrew killed; Colonel Hatch, of Iowa, defeated Forrest in Tennessee; and General Herron captured Yazoo City, with many prisoners and stores. On the sixteenth, General Blunt again beat the rebels near Fort Gibson. On the seventeenth, General Stanley captured Huntsville. On the eighteenth, Colonels Powell and Tolland surprised Wytheville, and cut the Virginia and East-Tennessee Railroad; General Potter left Newbern on a successful expedition into the interior of North-Carolina; and four hundred rebels were captured at Rienzi, in Mississippi. On the twentieth, one thousand five hundred of Morgan's men were captured in Ohio. On the twenty-second, Lee's whole army was in full retreat on Winchester. On the twenty-third, General Spinola defeated a division of Longstreet's after a brilliant fight. On the twenty-fourth occurred another defeat of a rebel detachment at Front Royal. On the twenty-sixth, Morgan and the remainder of his band were captured; and on the twenty-ninth, Pegram, who had ventured into Ken-

tucky, was met and so badly beaten, that his campaign ended almost before it was fairly begun.

“Thus closed the month which began in such gloom and anxiety. Not only had the daring plan of the rebels been foiled; not only were the free States relieved of the invasion with which they had been threatened; not only was the Capitol of the nation saved from the fate prepared for it by the enemy; but that enemy lost during the month an entire army, and a third of another, besides numerous smaller detachments; in all amounting to at least seventy-five thousand men, and making, if we count in the losses of the rebels during the previous month, a total of not less than one hundred and forty thousand men, killed, wounded, and prisoners, besides numerous cannon, flags, and stores. Nor were other results wanting. In July the ‘Confederacy’ was cut in two, the Mississippi was opened, the rebels were driven out of Tennessee, and the greater part of Mississippi and Louisiana fell into our hands.

“For these great and glorious events we are to offer thanks to-morrow. As our grateful praises ascend to heaven, let them be mingled with prayers that our trials may not have been in vain; that our national purification may be complete and lasting; that we may never again be tempted to imperil liberty by concessions to slavery, or draw down upon ourselves the judgment of God by denying justice to our fellow-men. ‘Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.’ Nor let us forget the Psalmist’s saying: ‘For he will speak peace unto his people and to his saints; *but let them not turn again to folly.*’”

What, indeed, hath God wrought? We follow the narrative with increasing admiration to its close. Alas!

for us if our hearts are not moved to gratitude by all this. We are moved—every chord of the heart vibrates—our emotions are those of hearts full and overflowing. Our Chief Magistrate has anticipated the views of true men, and has brought us to the sanctuary to a most grateful service—Praise.

#### PRAYER AND INTERCESSION.

Another most appropriate part of our holy engagements to-day is prayer. Blessed be God for the throne of heavenly grace, where we are all welcome and always welcome. We are too much strangers there. If any people should be found to honor God at the mercy-seat, we are they, for our history is eminently a history of answered prayer. We know that God has not forgotten to be gracious, nor is his hand shortened, nor his ear heavy. The residue of the Spirit is his, and he is more ready to give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him than parents are to give good gifts to their children.

What objects of prayer rise up before us!

First come our *enemies*—such by their own course; our friends—our countrymen—sons of the same patriotic fathers—but alienated by the schemes of wicked ambition and mercenary and unprincipled demagogues. Never has there been, except among savages of the lowest grade, such bitter enmity, such unrelenting barbarity, such horrible multiplicities of enormities of revenge, such systematic butchery of the unoffending and helpless as has characterized the progress of the rebellion. Alas! what madness for cruelty and blood! The world will read with horror in future years the record of the faithful historian, and will connect it with the worst outbreaks of human passion the world has seen. It is most unaccountable, except as we

trace it to the despotism and cruelty of the slave system—a fearful school for cherishing the worst passions of fallen humanity.

Blessed be God, we are strangers to such embittered feelings in the loyal population; there has been no thirsting for blood as such. Evils there have been in the warfare; they have been such only as belong to war, which treads with iron hoof. It is remarkable that the only outpouring of such passion in the North has been in our city, and that clearly in the service of the rebellion and part of a scheme.

Here is a place for our prayers, for God has the hearts of all men in his hands, and he can turn them as the rivers of water are turned. And that enmity he only can subdue, fanned as it has been by demagogues and persistent suppression of truth. Would to God men could for a time be cool, and look at their position and its necessary consequences without passion—then a new day would dawn on us. Well has the President said: “Invoke the influence of His Holy Spirit to subdue the anger which has produced and so long sustained a cruel rebellion, and change the hearts of the insurgents.” Blessed, much to be desired favor! Let us seek it with the whole heart, and seek it daily.

We are asked especially to remember *our own Government to-day*, and they most emphatically should have our earnest and constant prayer. Never did any government enter upon its work surrounded by more difficulties than they. When the President entered upon his high duties, what a situation was his? Whom could he trust? Every mail conveyed to him the deep rumblings of the hurricane; announcements multiplied of men on every side retiring from posts for which the public bounty had educated them. The Treasury was

exhausted. Bloody designs were avowed as to himself. The capital was threatened with invasion, and was utterly without means of defense. No man who has occupied that post had such adverse circumstances to encounter. And onward what sympathy has he had ? He has been subjected to every kind of misrepresentation ; he has been charged with the worst of policies. Every witling and penny scribbler has made him his mark. The lowest have made him their football, led on by an unprincipled press. His constitutional advisers have had no measured portion of the obloquy. We have become all at once a people who are all field-marshals and strategists and legislators and political economists—all generals—in a word, all Solomons : our very women and misses are critics on military men and campaigns. One is constrained to say, Shame, shame on it !

My brethren, there are no men among us who should be more tenderly and lovingly remembered at the mercy-seat than our most worthy President and his Cabinet, and no men will appreciate it more than they. I speak advisedly. There are men there that know the worth of prayer ; who pray themselves ; who have gone to their knees weighed down by their responsibilities, as you and I have not gone, except as the hand of God has been heavy upon us. Their hearts glow with new hopes, and they go with new zest to their work, as they know that they have the sympathies and prayers of God's people. We can form no just conception of the amount and variety of burdens imposed on them — of their exhausting labor—of the attendant circumstances which make their work more onerous and trying — of the sacrifices constantly made. It is well to think of these things, that our prayers may be aided. And they

are our servants, they work for us and ours. They are flesh and blood as we are, and must wear under the constant friction of public duty. It is said they have made sad mistakes ; they are not infallible—they claim not to be ; and who does not make mistakes ? But who say there are mistakes—they who know it, or they who guess it, or they who wish it to be so ? We are too ready to find fault ; we jump to conclusions before we have facts ; we give ourselves too much to the hasty scribbling of newspaper editors and correspondents, who must cater their quota of columns for the public appetite. Rather let us pray for our President as for a father beloved ; for his coadjutors as able and reliable advisers ; for our generals and soldiers as for our brothers and friends ; for do they not come from among us and work for us ? There should be but one heart here. Pray, pray, pray, as we have never prayed before, constantly, perseveringly. Let us honor God herein as he expects to be honored.

But this is not all. Our sympathies carry us to the mercy-seat *for the multitude of sufferers* by the calamities of war. How multiplied are they in the circles of our friends—in our land ! How they meet us on the highway with maimed persons ! How they crowd the hospitals of the land ! The widows, the fatherless, parents deprived of devoted sons, loved ones missed in all circles—how wide-spread the feeling of bereavement ; and yet how is it submissively borne ! Because all that is endured is for our country—the fairest land beneath the sun—the heritage of our fathers, who have taught many of us with their own lips what it cost them.

It is the time of prayer. Let us here, and in our families, in our closets, cherish this blessed cause. Our God

is the hearer and answerer of prayer. He loves our importunity. His word to us is: "Open thy mouth and I will fill it." He would have us ask large things. Is he the Lord our God? This is one of the privileges which that relation secures to us. He heard the groaning of Israel in their various exigencies, and sent the needed and solicited blessing, because they were his people. Unworthy indeed they were, just as we are—ungrateful and unbelieving, as we have been; yet he would not forsake his people, nor cast off his inheritance; nor will he in our case. He will remember our covenant and hear. He will save us through prayer.

A third duty we owe to God is

#### REPENTANCE OF OUR SINS.

Our President names this in the close of his Proclamation: "And lead the whole nation through paths of repentance and submission to the divine will back to the perfect enjoyment of union and fraternal peace." The Apostle's teaching is, that "goodness leadeth to repentance," such repentance being the practical proof that the goodness is rightly appreciated and honored. It is easy to join with the mouth in the public song, easy to say with devout manner, "Bless the Lord;" but when the life is reformed, sins broken off, and a holy course entered on, the evidence is clear that the claims of goodness have gone down into the depths of the heart. This we need, and should earnestly seek. A highly favored people we have been, but a sadly guilty people have we been. God has long had grounds of controversy with us. This gigantic rebellion has been the rod of his chastisement, not for our destruction, but our purification. Let us hear the rod and Him who hath appointed it. Our pride and self-conceit, our vain,

idolatrous reliance on the perfection of our system and our institutions, our worldly-mindedness and unbelief, and forgetfulness of the rock whence we were hewn, and the hole whence we were digged, have been bitterly rebuked. It is time to turn to God, that we be not smitten any more. Let us not deceive ourselves; the Almighty has other arrows in his quiver; let us not provoke him anew. Our difficult work is not over; much remains to be done. Dark days may yet be before us. If so, it will be by his appointment, as a part of the refining process through which he will carry us. His word is positive. If we forsake his law and walk not in his judgments, if we break his statutes and keep not his commandments, "then will he visit our transgressions with the rod and our iniquity with stripes." This is a subject for personal application as well as national use. Let us take with us words, and turn to the Lord and confess our folly, and deprecate further judgments, and seek grace to submit to his will, and grace to walk in his ways.

Our duty is before us; it is solemn, it is comprehensive, it is urgent. To-day, if we hear His voice, and harden not our hearts, the beginning of blessings most rich and most abundant will be ours. Then to us will belong always, as it does to-day, the song of the Psalmist, closing his labors: "Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness. Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp. Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high-sounding cymbals. Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord." (Ps. 150.)



